

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 062 770

EM 009 756

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TITLE The Journal Supplement Abstract Service: A New Concept in Psychology Communication.
INSTITUTION American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Apr 72
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the International Communication Association Annual Convention (Atlanta, Georgia, April 19-22, 1972)

EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.65 HC-\$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Abstracts; Documentation; *Information Dissemination; Information Needs; *Information Services; *Psychology; Publications; Relevance (Information Retrieval)

IDENTIFIERS American Psychological Association; *Journal Supplement Abstract Service; JSAS; National Information System for Psychology; NISP

ABSTRACT

An integral part of the American Psychological Association's (APA) National Information System for Psychology, the Journal Supplement Abstract Service (JSAS) represents an innovative publication service designed to make available information of a type which is not now widely disseminated. JSAS prints and publishes descriptive abstracts and separately bound full text copies of such "fugitive" manuscripts. Discussed is the rationale underlying the service, a description of its characteristics and method of operation, and plans for future refinement based upon user needs and requirements. Although developed specifically for psychology, the JSAS publication concept may easily be applied to the scientific and professional communication systems of other disciplines. (RB)

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THE JOURNAL SUPPLEMENT ABSTRACT SERVICE: A NEW
CONCEPT IN PSYCHOLOGY COMMUNICATION

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Washington, D.C. 20036

No. of Pages 11

Copies distributed free

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This paper details the recent development and implementation of an innovative print-on paper publication service by the American Psychological Association. An integral part of the APA's National Information System for Psychology, the Journal Supplement Abstract Service represents a significant departure from the traditional concept of primary publication, and holds much promise for improving communication among researchers, educators, and practitioners in psychology, while at the same time reducing the ever increasing volume of information that currently flows within the present psychology communication system. Discussed is the rationale underlying the development of the service, a description of its characteristics and method of operation, and plans for future refinement based upon user needs and requirements. Although developed specifically for psychology, the JSAS publication concept may easily be applied to the scientific and professional communication systems of other disciplines.

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THE JOURNAL SUPPLEMENT ABSTRACT SERVICE:
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Every psychologist knows that there are important documents in psychology that are not published in any of the standard scientific journals, and that do not appear in book form. Many of these manuscripts are described as "fugitive" because abstracting services do not contain references to them, and their distribution, therefore, is limited.

The National Information System for Psychology (NISP) made an effort to accumulate such documents in several areas of applied psychology and to publish them in a trial operation of an Experimental Publication System (EPS). This publication system attracted a sufficient number of subscribers to suggest that a genuine interest in such manuscripts exists and, further, that the system might have become self-supporting in a fairly short time. However, manuscripts submitted during the brief life of the Experimental Publication System were not appreciably different from articles submitted to standard journals. Thus, it was difficult to justify the continuance of the system as an independent publication channel, even though its value as an experimental vehicle for obtaining data useful in defining future publication innovations was great. The Journal Supplement Abstract Service (JSAS) has been established as a second effort to attract diverse "fugitive" manuscripts.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Journal Supplement Abstract Service is to make available information of a type which, till now, has received only limited dissemination by the existing psychology communication system. Specifically,

JSAS is designed to serve the following functions:

- a. to make available to a small-sized audience items that are valuable to members of that audience;
- b. to encourage the creation of materials not now produced because distribution channels do not normally solicit them and because distribution in large numbers is uneconomical;
- c. to increase knowledge about and to provide an outlet for materials now distributed privately, through informal information communication channels, that should reach a wider audience and that should be retrievable through Psychological Abstracts; and
- d. to increase the available data base in psychology by identifying sources of useful data that are not normally reported in the published literature because they add only modest increments to knowledge or are too bulky for standard journal publication.

Because much of this material does find its way into standard journal publication, JSAS promises to be a significant factor in reducing the ever increasing demands now faced by the journals for the publication of more pages, for the acceptance of a diversity of heterogeneous and sometimes inappropriate material, and for more rapid publication. Further, by relieving the standard journals of responsibility to provide a current awareness function, and enabling them to focus on an archival function -- a function for which they are uniquely suited by format and tradition, it is believed that they could become more responsible to the needs of present-day psychologists.

SYSTEM CONCEPT

While differing significantly in several respects from the traditional mode of journal publication, JSAS is not unlike the innovative

publication services currently offered by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Department of Defense. That is, JSAS publishes and promptly disseminates information on two complementary levels: descriptive abstracts of manuscripts accepted by the system, and separately bound full text copies of these documents. Diverse types of materials relating to all content areas of psychology are actively solicited, and each submitted manuscript undergoes editorial review prior to acceptance and publication. Abstracts of each accepted manuscript are published quarterly in the JSAS Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology. Readers may then order from the Catalog the full text of only those manuscripts they have need for and want. A more detailed discussion of each of the JSAS system characteristics follows.

Diversity of Content

In keeping with the stated purpose of JSAS, the service is not limited to materials of any one type or format. Rather, diverse types of materials, in varying formats, are appropriate for publication and dissemination. These include:

- a. methodological techniques and procedures
- b. massive data collections
- c. educational materials
- d. major projects in progress
- e. descriptions of effective techniques or programs
- f. technical reports
- g. fresh looks at controversial issues
- h. demands on psychology
- i. management of psychological resources
- j. bibliographies
- k. APA task force reports
- l. information on psychology and public policy
- m. literature reviews
- n. well designed studies that are "near replications"
- o. well designed studies with negative results

Further, JSAS has been especially designed to accomodate these materials from all content areas of psychology -- i.e., following the traditional schema employed by Psychological Abstracts. These categories are:

- a. General
- b. Methodology & Research Technology
- c. Experimental Psychology
- d. Physiological Psychology
- e. Animal Psychology
- f. Developmental Psychology
- g. Social Psychology
- h. Personality
- i. Clinical Psychology
- j. Educational Psychology
- k. Personnel & Industrial Psychology

Active Solicitation

An active solicitation program has been initiated. Steps taken to date have included letters to special groups (e.g., APA membership, graduate department chairmen, R&D laboratories and institutions, government agencies, APA convention participants, heads of state departments of mental health, former EPS authors and subscribers, and subscribers to Behavior Today), requests for manuscript referrals from APA journal editors, and advertisements in selected APA publications. This strategy serves to both solicit manuscripts for the system as well as to promote its utilization by members of the psychological community. Additional efforts now in preparation are the inclusion of JSAS promotional materials in APA's exchange agreement with other professional associations, distribution of promotional materials at forthcoming professional conventions, and mailings to other special groups. It should be emphasized that this overall strategy is designed to elicit author and reader participation not only from among APA members, but from persons in all related disciplines that produce and use psychology information.

Editorial Review

A JSAS Panel of Editors has been appointed to review all manuscripts submitted to the system for publication. The panel is comprised of men and women prominent in each of the content areas of the discipline.

All serve voluntarily and without the traditional editorial stipend. Each has selected a number of Consulting Editors to assist in this effort. Special procedures have been developed to expedite the review process so that it generally does not exceed three weeks. Manuscripts are expected to meet the same standards of clarity in writing and organization that are set for journal articles. They differ in that they may be more lengthy, appeal to smaller audiences, or provide data that are useful to investigators in a particular area but that do not add new principles or new insights. Technical reports, task force reports, APA committee reports, and similar documents that have a short life span may also be submitted to the service. In general, manuscripts are not subjected to revision prior to their acceptance, and manuscripts that are not of sufficiently high quality are returned to the authors. It is stated JSAS policy that manuscripts accepted shall not have been published elsewhere unless they have been substantially changed or expanded, and that manuscripts accepted by JSAS shall not be published elsewhere following their appearance in JSAS. Throughout, the overriding editorial criterion for acceptance and publication by JSAS is that manuscripts be of high technical quality and be of potential value to members of the psychological community. JSAS is not intended to be, nor will it serve as a second class publication outlet. Its status will be equivalent to that accorded the standard APA journals, and will differ only with respect to the types of materials deemed appropriate for publication.

Catalog of Abstracts

The heart of the JSAS service is the dual mode of publication and dissemination. The JSAS publishes and disseminates information on two complementary levels: abstracts of manuscripts accepted by the system

and separately bound full text copies of these documents. The Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology, a quarterly JSAS publication, is sold on an annual subscription basis for \$10.00 per year. (A special single issue version of the Catalog was published in Fall 1971 and is available at a cost of \$3.00) The Catalog contains a complete bibliographic citation and a 100-300 word descriptive abstract of each accepted manuscript. During this first year of system operation, it is estimated that approximately 50-75 manuscripts will be abstracted in each quarterly issue. It is likely that many readers will find the information conveyed by the author prepared abstracts sufficient for their particular information needs. However, the system is designed to accomodate the needs of readers wishing to obtain any or all of the full text manuscripts abstracted in each issue of the Catalog.

Independent of its principle function of alerting readers to the availability of selected manuscripts, publication of a catalog of this nature is expected to yield three important by-products. It should be emphasized that while these added benefits accrue indirectly from the conceptual base of the JSAS system, their potential realization is directly linked to a reader's purchase of and use of the Catalog. That is, the Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology is conceived to have greater utility than to be simply a directory from which manuscripts can be ordered. First, by disseminating materials that traditionally flow only within informal communication channels, the Catalog should serve to stimulate informal communication behavior -- both with respect to volume, and to the number of individuals that, once having learned of the existence of networks in his or her area of interest, can benefit from the important communication functions they serve. A second

anticipated benefit is that because JSAS is designed to fulfill a current awareness function and to disseminate materials of a type not normally published in the standard journals, it is hoped that the Catalog will not only facilitate awareness of innovative works that can be said to be on the "cutting-edge" of a given area, but also research traditions and lines of inquiry that have not fit the mold of the standard journals. Such cross-fertilization, especially with regard to methodological techniques and procedures, is critical to a discipline's development and maturity. A third and related benefit is that the existence of JSAS and the Catalog can potentially reduce the proliferation we have witnessed in recent years of highly specialized and narrowly focused journals. Obviating the need for such limited appeal publications and disseminating full text manuscripts on a demand basis would not only serve to reduce the publication "glut" -- with significant time and monetary savings for all concerned, but by bringing these works under a single and convenient to use "umbrella," the potential for cross-fertilization within and across disciplinary lines would be substantially enhanced.

Separately Bound Documents

Those wishing to obtain the full text of any abstracted manuscript are able to do so directly from JSAS at a modest charge, thus eliminating costly time and monetary demands on authors. A convenient order form is enclosed with each copy of the Catalog. JSAS assumes the responsibility of reproducing the manuscript and preparing it in separately bound format. Ordered documents are reproduced by photocopy of the original text provided by the author. Cost to the requester is \$2.00 per copy. Given sufficient demand for a particular title, photo-offset reproduction or typesetting of the original will be employed. Manuscripts are not

reproduced on a single copy basis to meet daily demand, nor is each manuscript regularly reproduced in quantity. Rather, projective tools are being developed to anticipate expected demand overtime, thus insuring efficient and cost-effective system operation.

SYSTEM OPERATION

The actual operation of the JSAS publication service may be best illustrated by tracing the flow of a typical manuscript through the system:

1. Author submits manuscript and abstract (in triplicate) to JSAS-APA. At least one copy of manuscript is in reproducible or "camera-ready" form.
2. APA assigns materials to appropriate JSAS content area.
3. APA records submission and prepares set of control cards and routing forms.
4. APA forwards one copy of manuscript and abstract, along with routing forms to Editor.
5. Editor and/or Consulting Editor reviews materials and completes routing forms.
6. Editor advises APA of review decision and returns materials. (Editor forwards copy of correspondence to APA if modification of manuscript is requested of author.)
7. APA notifies author of review decision via routing form completed by Editor.
8. If review decision is to publish, abstract is printed in the Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology.
9. Reader returns order form and requests full text manuscript from APA.
10. APA reproduces manuscript from master file and sends separately bound document to requester.

With respect to overall system operation, APA staff performs the following activities on an ongoing basis: (a) maintains files and records of all submitted manuscripts and their status within the

system; (b) classifies submitted manuscripts into appropriate content area categories; (c) develops and implements solicitation strategy for manuscripts and subscriptions, including preparation of promotional materials; (d) processes manuscript reprint orders; (e) processes subscription orders; (f) processes requests for information; (g) prepares weekly summary status reports; (h) technically edits abstracts in preparation for Catalog production; (i) arranges for production and printing of Catalog on contract basis; (j) develops and implements plan for system review and evaluation; (k) plans and initiates system modifications as required; and (l) maintains liaison with JSAS Panel of Editors, JSAS Evaluation Panel, APA's Communications Committee, Psychological Abstracts, and the boards and committees of APA's governance structure.

A detailed set of working procedures have been constructed for each of the above tasks and activities, including those performed by the editorial panel. These procedures have been especially designed to expedite the review process, to minimize the level of clerical activity, and to maintain system integrity. The latter is of particular importance in light of the unique elements built into the JSAS system, elements that are not normally associated with the publication and operation of standard scientific journals.

EVOLUTION AND SCHEDULING

The present JSAS system configuration calls for the publication of a catalog of abstracts, and reproduction and dissemination of full text documents on a demand basis. A special single-issue version of the Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology was prepared for Fall 1971 publication, and is now being sold to individuals and institutions on

a single copy basis. Beginning in January 1972 and from thereafter, the Catalog will be issued quarterly and will be available on an annual subscription basis.

However, as JSAS continues to attract an increasingly larger number of subscribers and authors, and as the psychological community becomes accustomed to using a service of this type, certain system elements may undergo modification. For one, the sale of manuscripts on a demand basis may no longer be a desirable system characteristic. Rather, selectively focused distribution of manuscripts based upon some variant of content categories or user descriptors may be preferable, and in fact more economical. Evaluative data will be required to determine the desirability and actual timing of such a change. Similarly, with respect to document reproduction it is possible that microform reproduction for document storage purposes or as a saleable product in its own right -- especially to institutions -- may become desirable. However, experience is needed concerning manuscript submission volume, request volume, range and average length of manuscripts, etc. It is these data that will determine the timing and mix of desirable reproduction techniques. Should an automated microform capability become a desirable feature of JSAS, acquisition is not likely to occur prior to calendar year 1973. Similarly, selectively focused distribution of manuscripts, if implemented, would not likely be done so prior to 1974.

EVALUATION

The JSAS is experimental in nature and will undergo continual review and evaluation. Evaluation will also provide input enabling the service to remain responsive to the information needs of the psychological community, and it will, at the same time, guide the evolutionary development and refinement of the system in a planned and logical manner. The JSAS

Evaluation Panel, especially created for this purpose, has specified the following objectives. Empirical data concerning the nature of manuscripts submitted, the amount of interest in subscribing to the Catalog, and the amount of ordering of reprints will provide an important base for evaluating the service. It must also meet the requirements that materials submitted are of high quality, do not overlap with the current journals, and prove useful to those persons who order them. Finally, a critical test of the usefulness of the service will be the favorable impact of its existence on the quality of accepted articles in the archival journals.